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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 187428
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE IMPORT QUOTAS ON LEATHER

"FOLLOWING IS A REPEAT
QUOTE
P 272201Z DEC 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC

1. FOLLOWING IS FOR YOUR USE IN DISCUSSING JAPANESE
IMPORT QUOTA ON LEATHER:

EXCELLENT BACKGROUND IS CONTAINED IN TOKYO A-117 OF MARCH
10, 1975, AND AG ATTACHE TOKYO'S AIRCOM 90 OF MARCH 29,
1977. EMBASSY SHOULD HAVE COPIES.

2. IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON LEATHER HAVE BEEN IN PLACE
SINCE END OF WAR. LEATHER QUOTAS ARE AMONG JAPANESE
GATT-ILLEGAL RESIDUAL QRS. IN RECENT YEARS, JAPANESE
HAVE MAINTAINED GLOBAL QUOTA EQUAL TO LESS THAN 2 PERCENT OF
CONSUMPTION. IN 1972, AFTER MUCH PRODDING BY U.S.G.
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GOJ TOLD US THAT IT WOULD RESERVE PART OF THE "GLOBAL"
QUOTA FOR U.S. SUPPLIERS. IN JFY 1975, LATEST YEAR
FOR WHICH STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE,U.S. "EXCLUSIVE"
WAS $2.3 MILLION OUT OF "GLOBAL" QUOTAS OF $8.38 MILLION.

3. U.S. "EXCLUSIVE" QUOTA REMAINS UNFILLED FOR SEVERAL
REASONS. FIRST, IT IS TOO SMALL TO JUSTIFY A SERIOUS

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MARKETING CAMPAIGN. IN ADDITION, U.S. LEATHER EXPORTERS HAVE ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES IN DETERMING THE QUOTA CEILING AND IN IDENTIFYING HOLDERS OF IMPORT PERMITS UNDER THE QUOTA. U.S. INDUSTRY SOURCES ALLEGE THAT SOMETIMES INDIVIDUALS ILL PURCHASE QUOTA PERMITS IN ORDER TO PREVENT IMPORTS. PRICE OF IMPORT QUOTA PERMIT IS ANOTHER DISINCENTIVE IN SOME CASES. PROBABLY MOST IMPORTANT COMPLAINT OF U.S. INDUSTRY IS THAT THE AMBIGUOUS NATURE OF THE JAPANESE SYSTEM MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR EITHER A WILLING SELLER OR A WILLING BUYER TO MAKE PLANS TO USE WHATEVER QUOTAS MIGHT BE AVAILABLE. EVEN IF QUOTAS WERE INCREASED (A MAJOR GOAL OF U.S. INDUSTRY), ADMINISTRATIVE MYSTERIES WILL HAVE TO BE SOLVED AND BUREAUCRATIC SWAMP WILL HAVE TO BE DRAINED IF IMPORTS ARE TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY.

4. U.S. INDUSTRY WOULD ALSO LIKE REDUCTION ON JAPANESE DUTY ON LEATHER, WHICH IS NOW 20 PERCENT.

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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